

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY LA PAZ
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8704
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 3 LA PAZ 10280

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT, BL
SUBJECT: BANZER THE MAN

1. BEFORE I LEFT WASHINGTON, SEVERAL KEY US OFFICIALS TOLD ME THEY DID NOT HAVE A REAL FEEL FOR BANZER THE MAN, SO I OFFER MY ASSESSMENT AFTER TWO MONTHS' EXPERIENCE WITH THE SUBJECT.

2. HIS CLOUT. DESPITE HIS DECISION NOT TO RUN IN THE ELECTIONS HE HAS CALLED FOR JULY 1978, GENERAL HUGO BANZER REMAINS THE MAN OF THE HOUR IN BOLIVIA POLITICS. HE IS STILL THE ONLY CONTEMPORARY POLITICAL FIGURE OF NATIONAL STATURE THROUGHOUT THIS FRAGMENTED COUNTRY. (AND BY HIS OWN USE OF POLITICAL EXILE HE HAS HELPED ASSURE THAT PAST LEADERS OF THE MNR REVOLUTION, IN PARTICULAR VICTOR PAZ AND HERNAN SILES, HAVE LOST THE NATIONAL RECOGNITION THEY HAD A GENERATION AGO.) BOTH THE DECISIONS TO HOLD ELECTIONS IN 1978 AND NOT TO RUN HIMSELF WERE OPPOSITION AND INDECISION AMONG HIS TRADITIONAL SUPPORTERS. HE HAS SO POSITIONED HIMSELF IN THE MILITARY AND THE GOVERNMENT THAT HE ALONE IS ABLE TO MAKE ELECTIONS HAPPEN OR CALL THEM OFF. HE HIMSELF HAS TAPPED JUAN PEREDA AS THE NATIONALIST CANDIDATE
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FOR PRESIDENT IN THE UPCOMING ELECTIONS, AGAINST THE GRAIN OF THE PREFERENCES OF HIS ASSOCIATES, INCLUDING PEREDA HIMSELF. BANZER THE MAN WILL ALSO REMAIN A MAJOR POLITICAL POWER IN BOLIVIA REGARDLESS OF THE OUTCOME OF THE JULY ELECTIONS. HE TAKES VERY SERIOUSLY THE MILITARY'S CONTINUING "TUTELAR" ROLE, OR RESPONSIBILITY TO ASSURE SOCIAL PEACE AND POLITICAL STABILITY, AND AS COMMANDER IN CHIEF OF THE ARMED FORCES

WILL BE IN A POSITION PERSONALLY TO DEFINE AND CARRY OUT THIS
ROLE AFTER ELECTIONS.

3. ABOVE ALL, BANZER IS A NATIONALIST, PRAGMATIC AND CUNNING
POLITICIAN WITHOUT PEERS IN THE CURRENT BOLIVIAN SCENE. BANZER
ENJOYS POWER AND HAS PREFERRED DURING HIS GOVERNMENT TO EXERCISE
IT HIMSELF, WITH A FIRM, BUT LIGHT TOUCH, THAT KEEPS BOTH HIS
ASSOCIATES AND OPPONENTS OFF BALANCE AND UNSURE OF HIS NEXT MOVE.
YET HE HAS PRECIPITATED HIS OWN SLIDE FROM POWER BY DECLINING
TO RUN IN ELECTIONS HE COULD HAVE WON. BY CALLING EARLY ELECTIONS
AND THEN WITHDRAWING PRECIPITATELY FROM THE RACE, BANZER HAS
INDICATED A PARTLY CLUMSY AND NONSTRATEGIC APPROACH TO ELECTIONS
WHICH SOME FEEL HAS INCREASED THE PROSPECTS FOR INSTABILITY AND
VIOLENCE. BANZER'S LAME DUCK STATUS ALSO REDUCES SOMEWHAT HIS
OWN LEVERAGE. YET HE RETAINS THE ONLY REAL POWER OF
INITIATIVE IN BOLIVIAN POLITICS AND BY HIS OWN RECENT MOVES IS
ONCE AGAIN, IN BANZER STYLE, RECOUPING SOME OF THIS LEVERAGE
BY RETIRING, TRANSFERRING AND BOXING IN THOSE IN THE MILITARY
WHO OPPOSE HIS ELECTORAL PLAN.

4. HIS CHARACTER. FIRST AND FOREMOST, BANZER IS A PRAGMATIC
AND HARD-WORKING POLITICIAN WHOSE LIFE FOR THE PAST SIX YEARS
HAS BEEN DEVOTED TO RETENTION AND SKILLFUL EXERCISE OF POWER.
KEENLY INTELLIGENT, HE IS AT THE SAME TIME BASICALLY
UNINTELLECTUAL BOTH AS REGARDS POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY AND HUMAN
AFFAIRS IN GENERAL. HE IS LOW ON IDEOLOGICAL ORIENTATION,
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APART FROM STRONG NATIONALISM. EVEN HIS NATIONALISM IS GROUNDED
MORE IN PRIMACY FOR THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OF HIS COUNTRY
THAN IN THE POLITICAL SYMBOLS OF PRESTIGE AND POWER. HIS
DECISION TO STEER BOLIVIA TOWARD CONSTITUTIONAL, CIVILIAN
RULE STEMS LESS FROM DEMOCRATIC CONVICTION THAN A JUDGMENT
THAT THIS COURSE BEST SERVES BOLIVIA'S AND THE MILITARY'S
INTEREST IN SELF-PRESERVATION AND LONG-RUN STABILITY. INTER-
NATIONALLY, HE CAN AND DOES TALK THE GAME OF "IMPERIALISTIC
INDUSTRIAL POWERS" AS EXPLOITERS OF SMALL COMMODITY PRODUCERS,
BUT HE TENDS TOWARD GREATER MODERATION THAN CHARACTERIZES
GROUP OF 77 VIEWS ON ISSUES OTHER THAN THOSE WHERE BOLIVIA'S
DIRECT INTERESTS ARE INVOLVED (TIN, LAND-LOCKED STATUS).

5. HIS OWN TREATMENT IN EARLIER YEARS BY OTHER POLITICIANS--
IMPRISONMENT, EXILE, TWO ATTEMPTED COUPS AGAINST HIM IN '74--
HAVE MADE BANZER A SUSPICIOUS AND CAUTIOUS LEADER WHO MAKES
ONLY LIMITED AND CAREFUL DELEGATIONS OF HIS CONFIDENCE.
OVER SIX YEARS OF HIGHLY CENTRALIZED RULE, HIS CLOSE
CIRCLE OF CONFIDANTS, "THE FRIENDS OF PRESIDENT BANZER" HAS
BEEN CONTINUALLY NARROWED BY SUDDEN FALLS FROM GRACE OF FORMER
CRONIES TO THE POINT WHERE NO MORE THAN A HALF A DOZEN LONG-
TESTED COLLEAGUES SHARE BANZER'S THOUGHT PROCESSES LEADING TO

MAJOR DECISIONS. THIS LONELY STYLE OF LEADERSHIP, COMBINED WITH A GRUELING SCHEDULE OF WORK AND BASICALLY UNHAPPY PERSONAL LIFE, SKETCH THE SOMBER SIDE OF BANZER'S CHARACTER. (BANZER'S INDEPENDENT WIFE MAINTAINS LUCRATIVE AND POSSIBLY DUBIOUS BUSINESS DEALINGS WHICH ARE A GREAT POTENTIAL EMBARRASSMENT TO BANZER; HE HAS MAINTAINED A STRONG EXTRA-MARITAL RELATIONSHIP FOR YEARS.) BANZER HAS A STRONG TEMPER THAT CAN FLARE WHEN HIS DIGNITY IS INSULTED. WHEN A JOURNALIST ACCUSED HIM OF SETTING UP THE ASSASSINATION OF GENERAL ZENTENO, BOLIVIAN AMBASSADOR IN PARIS IN 1976, BANZER CALLED HIM IN AND SLUGGED HIM. SOME SENIOR OFFICIALS AND MILITARY OFFICERS HAVE BEEN FIRED IN FLASHES OF ANGER.

6. YET THERE IS A BRIGHT SIDE WHICH DOMINATES. BANZER IS AN
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EXTREMELY INTELLIGENT, GRACIOUS AND OFTEN CONSIDERATE PERSON, WHO LISTENS WELL AND FINDS TIME TO HEAR OUT AND RESPOND TO THE CONCERNS TO AN AMAZING NUMBER OF BOLIVIANS OF ALL STATIONS. A VERY LARGE NUMBER OF BOLIVIANS CLAIM THEY HAVE DISCUSSED SOME MATTER PERSONALLY WITH BANZER. EVERY OFFICER OF THE BOLIVIAN ARMED FORCES HAS PROBABLY TALKED TO, BEEN DECORATED BY OR

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SHARED A DRINK WITH BANZER. HE HAS ON INNUMERABLE OCCASIONS

RIDDEN HOURS TO INAUGURATE A RURAL SCHOOL, SAT FOR HOURS DURING CAMPESINO SPEECHES AND PETITIONS, AND SPENT A COUPLE MORE DRINKING THEIR FIREWATER AND EATING THEIR FOOD.

7. ORIGINALLY WOODEN IN HIS SPEAKING EFFORTS, HE HAS BECOME EXTREMELY ARTICULATE, EVEN ELOQUENT, IN HIS PUBLIC APPEARANCES. WHILE LACKING IN REAL CHARISMA AND STILL CONSPICUOUSLY OF ANOTHER CLASS THAN RURAL BOLIVIANS, HE IS WIDELY ACCEPTED AND RESPECTED AS A SINCERE NATIONALIST AND COMMANDING LEADER. BECAUSE HE ALMOST NEVER RELAXES NOR DISPLAYS HIS HUMOR IN PUBLIC, HE IS A COLORLESS POLITICIAN. YET HIS HUMILITY AND TOTAL ESCHEWAL OF ARROGANCE IN PUBLIC MAKE HIM A WIDELY ADMIRERED FIGURE IN A SHALLOW SEA OF EQUALLY COLORLESS BUT MORE ARROGANT AND LESS INTELLIGENT POLITICIANS. IN SMALL GROUPS OR ONE-ON-ONE HE IS MORE EFFECTIVE, BOTH AS A LISTENER AND COMMUNER, AND A FORCEFUL, PERSUASIVE ADVOCATE. HE ONLY RELAXES COMPLETELY WHEN IN AN INFORMAL GATHERING OF MILITARY MEN--HIS OWN KIND. DESPITE THE PASSION OF PAST POLITICS IN BOLIVIAN AND BANZER'S OWN EXILE OF MANY POLITICAL FOES, THERE ARE REMARKABLY FEW BANZER HATERS. HIS PERSONALITY, RELATIVE MODERATION IN TREATMENT OF OPPONENTS AND RESPECTED PERFORMANCE AS BOLIVIA'S CONFIDENTIAL

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PRESIDENT, TEND TO PRODUCE SURPRISINGLY SYMPATHETIC REACTIONS TO BANZER THE MAN, EVEN AMONG HIS POLITICAL OPPONENTS.

8. BANZER IS AN ABLE MANAGER AND HIS GOVERNMENT IS CONSIDERED COMPETENT BY BOLIVIAN STANDARDS ALTHOUGH NOT PARTICULARLY HONEST. WHILE ALMOST ALL HIS MINISTERS ARE MILITARY MEN, MOST OF HIS CLOSE CIRCLE OF PALACE FRIENDS--WITH THE PROMINENT EXCEPTION OF JUAN PEREDA--ARE CIVILIANS. HE HAS ALSO PLACED AND KEPT AN ABLE TEAM OF CIVILIAN TECHNOCRATS IN THE SUBCABINET POSITIONS--USING THE COMPULSORY PUBLIC SERVICE REQUIREMENT WHEN NECESSARY--THUS PROVIDING A CONTINUITY IN BUREAUCRATIC MANAGEMENT ALMOST UNKNOWN IN BOLIVIAN HISTORY. YET BANZER HAS SHOWN WIDE TOLERANCE OF CORRUPTION AND DISHONESTY IN HIS ADMINISTRATION AS LONG AS IT DOES NOT BECOME BLATANT, PUBLIC AND POLITICALLY EMBARRASSING.

9. WHILE A MILITARY MAN FIRST AND LAST, BANZER'S PRIORITY FOR USE OF BOLIVIA'S RESOURCES HAS BEEN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT. HE HAS DOGGEDLY RESTRAINED THE ARMED FORCES FROM ALL MAJOR ARMS PURCHASES. HE FEARS A PERU-CHILE CONFLICT RESULTING IN VIOLATION OF BOLIVIAN TERRITORY. YET HE HAS OPTED NOT TO GO TO THE ARMS MARKET. HE REALIZES THAT HIS COUNTRY CAN ILL AFFORD TO SPEND MONEY ON ITEMS WHOSE RETURNS TO A DEVELOPING SOCIETY ARE MINIMAL AND, FURTHERMORE, HE KNOWS THAT BOLIVIA JUST DOES NOT HAVE THE NUMBERS AND TYPES OF PERSONNEL TO MAN, OPERATE AND MAINTAIN THE EQUIPMENT NEEDED FOR A CREDIBLE FIGHTING FORCE. I ALSO FEEL THAT HE BELIEVES THAT SHOULD

BOLIVIAN TERRITORY BE VIOLATED BOLIVIA WOULD BE IN A MORE FAVORABLE POSITION TO PLEAD ITS CAUSE IF SHE HAD BEEN SCRUPULOUSLY NEUTRAL AND HAD NOT POSED A MILITARY THREAT TO ANYONE.

10. HIS POLITICAL STYLE. IN A COUNTRY THAT HAS HAD, ON THE AVERAGE, CONFIDENTIAL

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MORE THAN ONE PRESIDENT FOR EACH YEAR OF ITS HISTORY, BANZER'S SIX-YEAR REGIME IS PROOF OF HIS EXCEPTIONAL POLITICAL SKILL. IN A NATION TRADITIONALLY KNOWN FOR ITS POLITICAL VIOLENCE, INTRIGUE AND INSTABILITY, BANZER HAS CONSISTENTLY OUTFOXED RIVALS FOR POWER. UP TO NOW HE HAS CONTROLLED THE MILITARY THROUGH A COMBINATION OF EXILING SERIOUS RIVALS, THE DEFT PROMOTION, TRANSFER OF BUYING OFF OF THE REST AND, ON OCCASION IN HIS EARLY YEARS, POLITICAL IMPRISONMENT AND, SOME ALLEGE, MURDER. ONE OF HIS CHIEF RIVALS, COLONEL ANDRES SELICH, THE CO-MAKER OF THE 1971 COUP, WAS KILLED BY MINISTRY OF INTERIOR AGENTS, ALTHOUGH PERHAPS ACCIDENTALLY. A WELL-KNOWN MILITARY FAMILY, THE AYOROA CLAN, WAS SYSTEMATICALLY REMOVED FROM THE ARMED FORCES AND EXILED OR PLACED UNDER HOUSE ARREST. AT THE SAME TIME, BANZER HAS SHOWN LENIENCY IN THE CASE OF SOME MILITARY OPPONENTS. PARTICIPANTS IN TWO ATTEMPTED COUPS IN 1974 WERE EXILED, SOME SIMPLY SENT TO MILITARY ATTACHE POSITIONS IN BOLIVIAN EMBASSIES. SOME HAVE BEEN ALLOWED TO RETURN TO IMPORTANT POSITIONS IN BOLIVIA, INCLUDING LT. COL. GARY PRADO, WHO IS NOW A PRESIDENTIAL ADVISER.

11. BANZER TOOK FIRM MEASURES AGAINST OPPOSITION CIVILIAN POLITICIANS, ESPECIALLY DURING HIS FIRST THREE YEARS IN POWER, EXILING MANY PROMINENT POLITICOS AND IMPRISONING THOSE CONSIDERED DANGEROUS EXTREMISTS OR HIGHLY VOCAL OPPONENTS. FOLLOWING THE NOVEMBER 1974 COUP ATTEMPT, BANZER OUTLAWED POLITICAL PARTY, LABOR UNION AND STUDENT ORGANIZATION ACTIVITIES, ALTHOUGH THE ORGANIZATIONS THEMSELVES WERE ALLOWED TO EXIST AND EVEN CARRY ON A MODICUM OF NORMAL BUSINESS. IN SHORT, BANZER HAS DISPLAYED A FIRM AND OFTEN DICTATORIAL HAND, BUT WITH A RATHER SOFT TOUCH BY BOLIVIAN STANDARDS.

12. WHILE BANZER DOES PLAN AHEAD AND IS STRONGLY MOTIVATED BY HIS PERCEPTION OF FUTURE RISKS TO BOLIVIA'S TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY, HE IS NOT A STRATEGIST, BUT A PRAGMATIC, MEDIUM-TERM TACTICIAN. HE TENDS TO MAKE HIS DECISIONS ALONE AND ON THE CONFIDENTIAL

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BASIS OF HIS READING OF EVENTS AS THEY DEVELOP. HE DOES CONSULT WITH AN EXTRAORDINARY NUMBER OF PEOPLE, BUT TIPS HIS OWN HAND ONLY AMONG THE SMALL AND SHRINKING GROUP OF "FRIENDS OF PRESIDENT BANZER"--PROMINENT AMONG THEM JUAN PEREDA, JAVIER ARCE, EDWIN TAPIA, AND ALFREDO ARCE. THE MILITARY, AS WELL AS OTHERS, HAVE BECOME INCREASINGLY UNHAPPY WITH THE EXTENT TO WHICH BANZER TURNS TO THIS SMALL, LARGELY CIVILIAN GROUP, TO DISCUSS HIS POLITICAL MOVES. YET NOT EVEN THE MEMBERS OF THIS INNER CIRCLE CAN RELIABLY PREDICT BANZER'S DECISIONS, AND ABRUPT CHANGES OF COURSE ARE MADE BY BANZER'S DECIDING AND ACTING ALONE. AN EXAMPLE WAS BANZER'S SUDDEN DECISION TO ANNOUNCE THAT HE WOULD NOT BE A CANDIDATE IN 1978, SURPRISING MOST OF HIS CLOSEST ADVISERS.

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13. HIS RECORD. BANZER'S RECORD IN HISTORICAL TERMS WILL BE A MIXTURE OF STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES AND LUCK. THE GREAT STRENGTHS WILL BE:

A. SIX YEARS OF UNPRECEDENTED POLITICAL STABILITY IN BOLIVIA HAVE GIVEN SO MANY BOLIVIANS A REAL STAKE IN SOCIAL AND POLITICAL PEACE THAT AN ENORMOUS INHIBITION AGAINST THE KAMAKAZI POLITICS OF THE PAST HAS BEEN CREATED.

B. BY MEANS OF IMPRESSIVE, SUSTAINED ECONOMIC PROGRESS AND CONSERVATIVE ECONOMIC MANAGEMENT, BOLIVIA'S IMAGE INTERNATIONALLY HAS CHANGED FROM A BAD JOKE TO ONE OF LATIN AMERICA'S MOST RAPIDLY GROWING AND APPARENTLY STABLE ECONOMIES. THE DEAD-BEAT DEBTOR HAS BECOME A PRIME INVESTMENT.

C. WHILE BEING LESS BAD IS NOT A CLEAN BILL OF HEALTH, THE PALPABLE NEAR ABSENCE OF ARBITRARY ARREST AND REPRESSION IN LATE 1977 IS, TO MOST BOLIVIANS, A CLEAR CONTRAST TO THE FREE-WHEELING, VIOLENT REPRESSION OF A LONG SUCCESSION OF BOLIVIAN GOVERNMENTS.

D. THROUGHOUT SIX YEARS OF MILITARY GOVERNMENT BANZER HAS
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DENIED THE MILITARY ANY SIGNIFICANT INVESTMENT IN THEIR MILITARY FIGHTING CAPABILITY (THEY HAVE LITTLE) WHILE STRENGTHENING THEIR ECONOMIC AND CIVIC ACTION ROLES.

THE WEAKNESSES COME ALSO IN BIG PACKAGES.

A. THE TOTAL CENTRALIZATION OF POWER AND DECISION-MAKING IN BANZER'S GOVERNMENT, PLUS THE EXILE AND SUPPRESSION OF CIVILIAN LEADERS AND INSTITUTIONS HAVE LEFT BOLIVIA TOTALLY UNPREPARED FOR THE ELECTED, REPRESENTATIVE GOVERNMENT TOWARD WHICH BANZER IS STEERING. MILITARY FIGURES APPOINTED BY BANZER STILL RUN VIRTUALLY ALL THE MINISTRIES, MOST PUBLIC AGENCIES AND THE DEPARTMENTAL AND CITY GOVERNMENTS. POLITICAL PARTIES AND LABOR UNIONS WERE SUSPENDED UNTIL LAST MOXNTH. MOST PROMINENT CIVILIAN POLITICIANS ARE STILL IN EXILE AND ELECTORAL REGISTERS AND MECHANICS ARE NONEXISTENT. THUS, THE POLITICAL FABRIC NECESSARY TO PRODUCE A REPRESENTATIVE AND FUNCTIONING PARLIAMENT AND OTHER CIVILIAN INSTITUTIONS HAS LITTLE CHANGE TO BE WOVEN BY JULY.

B. CORRUPTION AND LEGION WASTE IN BOLIVIA'S LARGE PUBLIC CORPORATIONS, PARTICULARLY COMIBOL AND YPFB, REMAIN NEAR SCANDALOUS. AN AUTHORITARIAN MILITARY GOVERNMENT WHICH HAD A UNIQUE OPPORTUNITY TO CLEAN HOUSE AND STOP THE HEMORRHAGE OF PUBLIC CAPITAL IN THESE UNGAINLY ENTERPRISES WILL LEAVE THE PROBLEM VIRTUALLY UNTOUCHED.

15. FINALLY, BANZER HAS HAD SOME EXCEPTIONAL LUCK, PRIMARILY SOARING PRICES FOR BOLIVIA'S TWO MAJOR EXPORTS, TIN AND OIL, WHICH HAVE PROVIDED THE ECONOMIC GREASE BOTH TO FINANCE STABLE GROWTH AND COVER SIGNIFICANT WASTE.

15. HIS FUTURE. BANZER, A MAN WHOSE RECENT LIFE HAS BEEN THE
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EXERCISE OF POWER, STEPPED DOWN AS A CANDIDATE IN AN

ELECTION HE WAS SURE TO WIN. HE DID THIS NOT BECAUSE THE TASTE OF POWER HAD SOURED, BUT BECAUSE OF THE CUMULATIVE IMPACT OF SEVERAL FACTORS THAT CAUSED HIM TO BELIEVE IT WAS IN HIS OWN BEST INTEREST NOT TO RUN. FIRST CAME HIS INABILITY TO PERSUADE THE ARME TO ACCEPT GENERAL JUAN PEREDA ASBUN, THEN MINISTER OF INTERIOR, AS INTERIM PRESIDENT. SUBSEQUENTLY, THERE WERE INDICATIONS OF DEEPER TROUBLE FOR BANZER IN HOLDING THE MILITARY'S SUPPORT FOR FOUR MORE YEARS. ALSO, HIS INABILITY TO FORM A COALITION WITH THE POLITICAL PARTIES AUGURED DIFFICULTIES FOR HIS CAMPAIGN. ADDITIONALLY, THERE ARE INDICATIONS THAT HE WAS CONCERNED THAT BOTH IS AND HIS WIFE'S PRIVATE BUSINESS DEALINGS WOULD SURFACE IN AN ELECTORAL CAMPAIGN. THUS BANZER PROBABLY SAW THAT HIS CANDIDACY, AND HIS VIRTUALLY ASSURED ELECTORAL VICTORY, COULD ULTIMATELY TURN INTO A DEFEAT FOR BANZER AND HIS PLACE IN HISTORY. BUT BOLIVIA'S MAN OF THE HOUR DOES NOT INTEND TO RETIRE FROM POWER, BUT RATHER TO RETAIN AS MUCH OF IT AS POSSIBLE THROUGH A MORE BEHIND-THE-SCENES ROLE. THUS HE HAS RESURRECTED AND ASSUMED THE POSITION OF COMMANDER IN CHIEF OF THE ARMED FORCES, INTENDING TO OCCUPY IT DURING WHAT HE SEES AS A "TRANSITIONAL ADMINISTRATION" (1978-1982) BETWEEN MILITARY AND CIVILIAN GOVERNMENT, IN WHICH THE MILITARY WILL HAVE A PARTICULARLY HEAVY TUTELAR RESPONSIBILITY FOR SMOOTH PASSAGE. HE ALSO HAS FOCUSED ALL HIS TACTICAL BRILLIANCE IN THE NEAR TERM ON PROMOTING THE CANDIDACY OF JUAN PEREDA, THE ONE INTELLIGENT AND ASTUTE GENERAL WHO IS ALSO TOTALLY TRUSTED BY BANZER.

16. HE ALSO MAINTAINS COMPLETELY IN HIS HANDS THE RESPONSIBILITY TO ASSURE ELECTIONS AND THE CAPABILITY TO CALL THEM OFF. HE IS MORE ZEALOUS OF THE FORMER, HOWEVER, FOR BANZER NOW HAS A STRONG INTEREST IN SEEING ELECTIONS THROUGH. HE HAS STAKED A GREAT PART OF HIS POLITICAL CAPITAL ON THE ELECTIONS AND CAN NO LONGER TAKE IT BACK. HE HAS SET IN MOTION SOME DYNAMIC FORCES THAT CANNOT BE REVERSED. SOME OF THE CRACKS

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IN THE MILITARY ITSELF AS WELL AS IN THE BOLIVIAN BODY POLITIC, OVER ELECTIONS, "CONTINUISMO" OF BANZER, AND SUCCESSION OF PEREDA, CAN NO LONGER BE REPAIRED BY BANZER'S STAYING ON. NOR CAN THE MILITARY THEMSELVES, AS MUCH AS THEY WOULD LIKE, AGREE ON A SUCCESSOR TO BANZER WITHOUT THE PEOPLE AT LARGE PARTIALLY ARBITRATING THIS CHOICE.

17. FINALLY, BANZER IS DEEPLY PROUD OF HIS ACHIEVEMENTS AND WANTS BOTH TO PRESERVE THE MAJOR ONE--POLITICAL STABILITY--AND ADD TO IT A LEGACY OF POLITICAL LEGITIMACY (I.E., BE THE MAN THAT RESTORED THE CONSTITUTION AND REPRESENTATIVE GOVERNMENT). IT WOULD PROBABLY TAKE A SIGNIFICANT OUTBREAK OF VIOLENCE IN THE PRE-ELECTORAL PERIOD TO MOVE BANZER TO

CANCEL ELECTIONS--AN OUTBREAK HE WILL DO ALL HE CAN TO AVOID.
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